



Symbolic submission of the Maria Convent at the University of Aruba Page 7



Linda Wolff, a trajectory dedicated to folkloric music

Page 11



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**Aqua Grill restaurant:
The taste of New England with
Caribbean flair**

Page 8

Analysis: Can Biden make his case for four more years?

By CHRIS MEGERIAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — This should be a high point of Joe Biden's presidency. He's repeatedly beaten the odds with a string of legislative accomplishments and a historically strong midterm election where Democrats held the line against Republicans. His steadfast support for Ukraine has won praise. The cloud of the pandemic has lifted. But instead, going into his State of the Union speech Tuesday night, he finds himself facing a problem that has shadowed him for years — public doubt. Polls show a majority of Americans are largely unaware of his successes and don't approve of his job performance. Even Democrats question whether he should run for reelection amid concerns about his age. It all adds up to a particularly high-stakes moment for Biden. The speech is likely the last, best opportunity to make his case for why he deserves a second term before his formal campaign announcement, believed to be several weeks away. "The State of the Union is often considered the opening bid in an argument for reelection," said Patrick Gaspard, a former White House political director and top official at the Democratic National Committee. "And in this situation, it's certainly the case."

Continued on Page 2



President Joe Biden walks over to speak with members of the press after stepping off Air Force One at Hagerstown Regional Airport in Hagerstown, Md., Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023, en route to Camp David for the weekend.

Associated Press



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Analysis: Can Biden make his case for four more years?

Continued from Front

Gaspard, who is currently president of the liberal Center for American Progress, said Biden has a strong record since taking office and now needs to demonstrate that he's "a man with a vision for tomorrow."

Biden's allies insist that the president is routinely underestimated, dating back to the 2020 Democratic primaries. He also offers a strong contrast to Republicans who his supporters say have become beholden to extremists within their party. "They're just not mature enough to sit at the table and govern," said Cedric Richmond, a former top White House official who is now a senior adviser to the Democratic National Committee. American presidents almost never forgo a shot at a second term. The last one was Lyndon Johnson, who did not seek reelection in 1968 after his presidency became unmoored by the Vietnam War. But there's also never been a president as old as Biden. He's 80, and would be 86 at the end of a second term. He first ran for the White House in 1988.

Lyndsay Chervinsky, a presidential historian, said Biden's age is "the X factor" that differentiates him from his predecessors. Even when other presidents faced low approval ratings during their first term, "no



President Joe Biden delivers his first State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress at the Capitol, March 1, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

one was suggesting that they not run."

"If he was ten years younger, none of these conversations would be happening," she said.

Biden gave a glimpse of his campaign pitch on Friday in Philadelphia, when he spoke at a Democratic National Committee meeting. He rattled off legislative accomplishments, some of which were achieved after they were left for dead in Congress, and blasted Republicans as "extremists," even calling them "nuts" at one point.

"Let me ask you a simple question. Are you with me?" he said to the cheer-

ing crowd, which responded by chanting, "Four more years!"

Political appearances rarely draw the same attention as the State of the Union. Last year, 38 million people tuned in, compared to nearly 100 million who watched the Super Bowl. Biden's challenge will be to find the right way to harness that fleeting focus, said presidential historian Michael Beschloss.

"The speech will probably be remembered for two or three lines," he said. "He has to decide which he wants those to be."

Biden plans to travel to Wisconsin on Wednesday and

Florida on Thursday to continue pushing his agenda after the State of the Union, part of an administration-wide plan for top officials to fan out across the country this week.

He's promised to announce a decision on running for reelection in the early part of this year. Donald Trump, who continues to falsely claim he did not lose to Biden, already announced in November that he would seek another term. Trump is only four years younger than Biden.

After a Democratic midterm showing that was strong by historical averages in a president's first

term, Biden has successfully tamped down handwringing within his party over whether he should seek another term. No primary opponent has emerged.

And he has a record to build upon. He's also secured investments in infrastructure, computer chip manufacturing and financial incentives to encourage Americans to adopt cleaner technologies for fighting climate change.

"At the end of the day, you can't argue with the extraordinary accomplishments, more than almost any other modern president, that President Biden has achieved, again, under the toughest of circumstances," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said in a Sunday interview with CNN's "State of the Union."

However, Biden still faces skepticism from the country at large.

Only 37% of Democrats say they want Biden to seek a second term, down from 52% before the midterm elections in November, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. A new Washington Post-ABC News poll said 36% of Americans believe Biden has accomplished "a great deal" or "a good amount" since taking office, while 62% said he's done "not very much" or "little or nothing." □



This image provided by the U.S. Navy shows sailors assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group 2 recovering a high-altitude surveillance balloon off the coast of Myrtle Beach, S.C., Feb. 5, 2023.

Associated Press

By TARA COPP
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Using underwater drones, war-

Navy releases first photos of Chinese balloon recovery

ships and inflatable vessels, the Navy is carrying out an extensive operation to gather all of the pieces of the massive Chinese spy balloon a U.S. fighter jet shot down off the coast of South Carolina on Saturday.

In the newest images released by the Navy on Tuesday, sailors from Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group 2 are seen leaning over a rigid hull inflatable boat and pulling in broad swaths of the balloon's

white outer fabric and shell structure.

The head of U.S. Northern Command, Gen. Glen VanHerck, said Monday the teams were taking precautions to safeguard against the chance any part of the balloon was rigged with explosives.

The balloon was an estimated 200 feet (60 meters) tall and was carrying a long sensor package underneath, which VanHerck estimated was the size of a small regional jet.

The Navy is also using ships to map and scan the sea floor for all remaining parts of the balloon, so U.S. analysts can get a full picture of what types of sensors the Chinese were using and to better understand how the balloon was able to maneuver.

The balloon debris is scattered in waters that are about 50 feet (15 meters) deep, but stretch across an area 15 football fields long and 15 football fields across, VanHerck said. □

States push to enshrine protections for tribal children

By AMY BETH HANSON

Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Leo Thompson received plenty of love, food and shelter from the non-Native American family who raised them, but missed out on any exposure to their Indigenous culture, heritage, ancestors and community.

"The only time they acknowledged my heritage was when they'd make passive comments like, 'Oh, you know, you've always liked that Native American stuff,'" said Thompson, who lives in Missoula, Montana. "That stuff that they so casually referred to is not casual at all. It's the practices of my ancestors. It's the very same culture that's healed my soul. Reconnecting with my heritage as an adult has been a long and arduous journey."

Montana is one of a handful U.S. states along with Wyoming, Utah and North Dakota considering legislation this year to keep more Native American children from enduring similar experiences by including provisions of the U.S. Indian Child Welfare Act in state law.

The states are driven by concerns that Supreme Court challenges have put the federal law in jeopardy. During a hearing last year, the justices seemed likely to leave in place most of the law that gives preference to Native American families in foster care and adoption proceedings involving Native children. The law also requires child welfare agencies to provide services to help Native families move toward reunification.

Ten other states have similar laws in place, including New Mexico, whose law took effect this year, and they too could be affected, depending on how the justices rule. Most federally recognized tribes want the act upheld, fearing that an adverse ruling could dismantle a whole range of federal laws based on their political relationships with the U.S. government.

Thompson, who uses she/they pronouns, shared their story during a recent legislative hearing on a bill sponsored by Montana Democratic Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy.

The federal Indian Child Welfare Act was passed by Congress in 1978 in response to the alarming rate at which Native American and Alaskan Native children were taken from their homes by public and private agencies. From 1887-1969, Native children were placed in boarding schools that used abusive practices to assimilate them into white society. Many were adopted by non-Native families, often depriving them of their tribal and cultural heritage.

The law has helped change that, but there is still work to do.

In Montana, nearly 11% of all children are Indigenous but they made up 37% of those in foster care in 2021, according to the National Indian Child Welfare Association. About 9% of North Dakota children are Indigenous, but account for 44% of the children in foster care, the association said.

"I have witnessed and experienced the benefits of keeping a child within the care of their family where he stays connected, rooted and knows who he is and where he comes from," Sharen Kickingwoman, with the ACLU of Montana, testified. "We know from our experiences and research that affirming Indigenous identity, especially for youth, is some of the strongest things you can do to enhance resilience amidst adverse childhood experiences."

Wyoming's effort is furthest along, having passed the Senate 20-11. In Utah, tribes and statewide officials support the proposal, yet lawmakers held it in a legislative committee during the final week of January amid questions about whether it was needed yet and despite a request by Navajo Nation leaders to pass it.

Bills in Montana and North Dakota have had committee hearings but no votes, while a South Dakota bill was rejected this week. □



Demonstrators stand outside of the U.S. Supreme Court, as the court hears arguments over the Indian Child Welfare Act on Nov. 9, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Super Bowl gambling surging as states legalize it? You bet

By **WAYNE PARRY**

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) —

As legal sports gambling proliferates, the number of Americans betting on the Super Bowl and the total amount they're wagering is surging — although most of the action is still off the books.

An estimated 1 in 5 American adults will make some sort of bet, laying out a whopping \$16 billion, or twice as much as last year, according to an industry trade group.

Even as legal gambling has spread to two-thirds of U.S. states, independent analysts say only about \$1 billion of the total being wagered on Sunday's game will happen through casinos, racetracks or companies such as FanDuel and DraftKings, whose ads have become ubiquitous during sporting events.

The vast majority of people, in other words, are still betting with friends and family, participating in office pools or taking their chances with a bookie.

More than 50 million American adults are expected to bet on the national championship game between the Philadelphia Eagles and the Kansas City Chiefs, according to the American Gaming Association, whose estimates are based



A customer, right, makes a sports bet at the Ocean Casino Resort in Atlantic City, N.J., Monday, Feb. 6, 2023.

Associated Press

on a nationwide online survey of 2,199 adults. That's an increase of 61% from last year.

Experts in addiction say aggressive advertising is contributing to a rise in problem gambling.

"As sports betting expands, the risk of gambling problems expands," said Keith Whyte, executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

Thirty-three states, plus Washington, D.C., now of-

fer legal sports betting, and more than half of all American adults live in one of those markets.

"Every year, the Super Bowl serves to highlight the benefits of legal sports betting," said Bill Miller, the gambling association's president and CEO. "Bettors are transitioning to the protections of the regulated market ... and legal operators are driving needed tax revenue to states across the country." But legal sports betting

still represents just a small piece of the pie.

Eilers & Krejcik Gaming Research, an independent analytics firm in California, estimates that just over \$1 billion of this year's Super Bowl bets will be made legally. The leading states are: Nevada (\$155 million); New York (\$111 million); Pennsylvania (\$91 million); Ohio (\$85 million) and New Jersey (\$84 million.)

The research firm estimates 10% to 15% of that total

would be wagered live after the game begins. Another 15% to 20% would come in the form of same-game parlays, or a combination of bets involving the same game, such as betting on the winner, the total points scored and how many passing yards Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts will accumulate.

As legal sports betting grows, so too has concern about its effect on people with gambling problems.

The National Council on Problem Gambling has conducted nationwide surveys since 2018, when New Jersey won a U.S. Supreme Court case clearing the way for all 50 states to offer legal sports betting. They ask questions like, "Do you ever borrow money to gamble?"

He added that the Super Bowl presents an opportunity to see how well responsible gambling messaging and campaigns by sports books and professional sports leagues are working. On Tuesday, New Jersey gambling regulators unveiled new requirements for sports books to analyze the data they collect about their customers to look for evidence of problem gambling, and to take various steps to intervene with these customers when warranted. □



A Federal Aviation Administration sign hangs in the tower at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, March 16, 2017.

Associated Press

By **DAVID KOENIG**

AP Airlines Writer

Congress began considering critical aviation legislation on Tuesday in the aftermath of recent close calls involving airline and cargo jets at airports in New York and Texas.

Lawmakers celebrated the small number of deaths on airline flights in the United States since a 2009 crash that killed 50 people, but they noted the recent scary incidents.

"It shows that even following the safest decade in our

Congress takes up legislation on federal aviation oversight

history, our aviation system is clearly in need of some urgent attention," said Rep. Sam Graves, R-Mo., chairman of the House Transportation Committee.

Graves' committee held its first hearing on a must-pass bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration by Sept. 30. The FAA regulates airlines and aircraft manufacturers and manages the nation's airspace. The hearing highlighted issues ranging from FAA technology — which broke down last month, snarling U.S. air travel for a day — to the size of airline seats.

FAA legislation usually fo-

cuses on safety, and that is likely to be the case again this year. Consumer groups also are pushing Congress to include a number of passenger-friendly provisions that are opposed by the airline industry. Some of the proposals would require airlines to:

— Quickly put passengers whose flights are canceled or significantly delayed on another flight — even if that means paying to put them on a competing airline.

— Increase compensation and reimbursement of expenses for passengers affected by delays and cancellations.

— Let parents and minor children sit together without paying additional seat-assignment fees; the groups say a 2016 directive to the Transportation Department has been held up.

— Include a seat, boarding pass, carry-on bag, personal item and water in the price of all tickets.

Lawmakers pressed an FAA official and other witnesses on technology upgrades, the need for quicker evacuations during emergencies, and minimum experience for airline pilots — that was raised from 250 hours of flying time to 1,500 hours after the 2009 crash. □

China says will 'safeguard interests' over balloon shootdown

BEIJING (AP) — China said Tuesday it will "resolutely safeguard its legitimate rights and interests" over the shooting down of a suspected Chinese spy balloon by the United States, as relations between the two countries deteriorate further.

The balloon prompted U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel a highly-anticipated visit to Beijing this week that had offered slight hopes for an improvement in relations.

China claims it was a civilian balloon used for meteorological research but has refused to say to which government department or company it belongs.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning on Tuesday reiterated that the "unmanned airship" posed no threat and entered U.S. airspace accidentally.

Mao again criticized the U.S. for overreacting rather than adopting a "calm, professional" manner, and for using force in bringing the balloon down Saturday in the Atlantic Ocean just off the U.S. coast.



Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning gestures during a press conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing, Thursday, Oct 13, 2022.

Associated Press

Asked if China wanted the debris returned, she only reasserted that the balloon "belongs to China."

"The balloon does not belong to the U.S. The Chinese government will continue to resolutely safeguard its legitimate rights and interests," Mao said at a daily

briefing without giving further details.

Beijing's attitude has hardened considerably following a surprisingly mild initial response on Friday, in which it described the balloon's presence as an accident and expressed "regret" for the balloon having entered

the U.S.

Subsequent statements have grown firmer, in the same tone used to confront the U.S. over issues from Taiwan to trade, technology restrictions and China's claim to the South China Sea. China says it lodged a formal complaint

with the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, accusing Washington of having "obviously overreacted and seriously violated the spirit of international law and international practice."

Recent developments have laid bare the extremely fragile nature of what many had hoped could be a manageable economic, political and military rivalry.

U.S.-China tensions have stirred deep concern in Washington and among many of its allies. They worry that outright conflict could have a strong negative impact on the global economy, especially since Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, on which China has largely sided with Moscow.

Balloons either suspected of or confirmed to be Chinese have been spotted over countries from Japan to Costa Rica. Taiwanese media have reported that mysterious white balloons had been spotted over the island at least three times in the past two years. □

Court denies aid for Hiroshima A-bomb survivors' children

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A Japanese court on Tuesday rejected a damage suit filed by a group of children of Hiroshima atomic bombing survivors seeking government support for medical costs, saying the hereditary impact of radiation exposure is still unknown.

A group of 28 plaintiffs whose parents suffered radiation exposure in the Aug. 6, 1945, U.S. atomic attack were demanding the central government include them in the medical support available to survivors.

The Hiroshima District Court said the possibility of a hereditary effect from radiation cannot be denied, but there is no established scientific consensus and the government's exclusion of the plaintiffs from medical

support is not unconstitutional.

The government has insisted there is no scientific evidence showing a hereditary effect from parents' radiation exposure on their children.

The plaintiffs filed a lawsuit in 2017 seeking 100,000 yen (\$760) each from the government in damages, saying their exclusion violated the constitutional right to equality.

A similar lawsuit by their peers in Nagasaki was also rejected in December.

The plaintiffs said they plan to appeal Tuesday's decision, which they called "unjust."

"It was an extremely cold ruling," plaintiff Taku Kaku-da told reporters. "It was as if we were told to prove the radiation impact on humans with our bodies."

The atomic bombing of Hi-

roshima destroyed the city and killed 140,000 people. The United States dropped a second bomb three days later on Nagasaki, killing another 70,000. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945, ending World War II and its nearly half-century of aggression in Asia.

Many survivors of the bombings have lasting injuries and illnesses resulting from the explosions and radiation exposure and have faced discrimination in Japan.

Their children, known as "hibaku nisei," or second-generation survivors of atomic bombs, say they constantly worry about the possible hereditary effects of radiation from their parents' exposure, and many have developed various forms of cancer and other health problems. They estimate their numbers at 300,000 to



Plaintiff Katsuhiko Hirano, right, and unidentified lawyer for the plaintiffs display signs after a judgement at Hiroshima District Court in Hiroshima, western Japan Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023.

Associated Press

500,000.

Currently, only survivors and those with prenatal exposure who were certified can receive government medical support for their radiation illnesses and cancer checkups. The government started providing free medical checks for their

children in 1979 but cancer examinations are not included.

"We understand that the court acknowledged our argument," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said of Tuesday's ruling. □

Sub-Saharan Africa is 'new epicenter' of extremism, says U.N.

By EVELYNE MUSAMBI

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — The new global epicenter of violent Islamic extremism is sub-Saharan Africa where people are increasingly joining because of economic factors and less for religious ones, says a new report by the U.N.'s international development agency. A significant increase of 92% of new recruits to extremist groups are joining for better livelihoods compared to the motivations of those interviewed in a previous report released in 2017, according to the UNDP report released on Tuesday.

Many Africans' lives have been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, high inflation, and climate change, said the report.

There has been a 57% decrease in the number of people joining extremist groups for religious reasons, it said.

Nearly 2,200 people were interviewed for the report in eight African countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria,



Shoes of the kidnapped students from Government Science Secondary School are seen inside their class room Kankara, Nigeria, Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020.

Somalia, and Sudan. More than 1,000 interviewees are former members of violent extremist groups, both voluntary and forced recruits, said the report.

At least 4,155 attacks across Africa were documented since in 2017, said the report. In these attacks, 18,417 deaths were recorded

in the continent with Somalia accounting for the largest number of fatalities. The Somali government is currently carrying out what has been described as the most significant offensive against the al-Shabab extremist group in more than a decade.

Those interviewed were

drawn from various extremist groups across the continent including Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabab in Somalia, which pledges allegiance to al-Qaida, and in West Africa Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen, or JNIM, which is allied to the Islamic State group.

"Sub-Saharan Africa has

become the new global epicenter of violent extremism with 48% of global terrorism deaths in 2021," UNDP administrator Achim Steiner said in a press briefing ahead of the report's launch. This surge in extremism in Africa "not only adversely impacts lives, security, and peace, but also threatens to reverse hard-won development gains for generations to come," he said. Military campaigns to stamp out extremism are not proving to be successful, said Steiner.

"Security-driven counter-terrorism responses are often costly and minimally effective, yet investments in preventive approaches to violent extremism are woefully inadequate," he said.

"The social contract between states and citizens must be reinvigorated to tackle root causes of violent extremism."

About 71% of those who joined extremist groups were influenced by human rights abuses by state security forces, such as the killings or arrests of family members, said the report. □

Associated Press

U.K. leader Sunak shakes up govt to focus on business, energy

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak shook up his government on Tuesday, moving ministers and merging departments in a bid to assert control amid ethics scandals

and sniping from Conservative Party colleagues. Sunak appointed lawmaker Greg Hands to chair the governing party, which is demoralized by dismal opinion poll ratings and a year of turmoil. Sunak is Britain's third Conservative

prime minister in less than a year.

Hands, a former trade minister who has served in Parliament since 2005, replaces Nadhim Zahawi, who was fired by Sunak last month after failing to come clean about a multimillion-dollar tax dispute.

As deputy party chair, Sunak installed Lee Anderson, an ex-coal miner turned combative legislator from the right wing of the Conservative Party who once said people use food banks because "they cannot cook properly" or make a budget.

Sunak has vowed to restore order and integrity to government after three years of instability under predecessors Boris Johnson brought down in summer 2022 by ethics scandals and Liz Truss, who quit in October after six weeks in

office when her tax-cutting economic plans sparked mayhem on the financial markets.

But he faces opposition allegations that the government remains mired in scandal and sleaze. Ethics inquiries are also underway over claims Johnson secured a loan with the help of a Conservative donor who was later appointed chairman of the BBC, and into allegations that Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab bullied staff. Raab denies bullying.

Sunak also rearranged the ministries responsible for business, energy, science and trade as part of his aim to boost the country's sluggish economy and make the U.K. a science and technology superpower.

Kemi Badenoch, formerly in charge of international trade, heads a new De-

partment for Business and Trade. Former Business Secretary Grant Shapps becomes Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

The government said the new energy department "has been tasked with securing our long-term energy supply, bringing down bills and halving inflation" after the cost-of-living crisis unleashed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"I think we've seen over the last year in particular the impact that happens to people's bills at home when energy policy doesn't work properly, when we're reliant on imported energy from hostile countries," Sunak told reporters.

"That's why the creation today of a new department focused specifically on energy security and net zero is so important." □



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, center left, and newly appointed Energy Security and Net Zero Secretary Grant Shapps, centre right, are given a tour of the District Energy Centre in central London, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023.

Associated Press

Symbolic submission of the Maria Convent at the University of Aruba

(Oranjestad)—Yesterday evening at the University of Aruba, an official symbolic act of submission took place, where the monument of the Maria Convent was submitted for the renovation of this historical building. The purpose of this was to give space for the University's SISSTEM faculty (Sustainable Island Solutions through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

Among the attendees were the Prime Minister Evelyn Wever-Croes and several other ministers, along with representatives of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), University of Aruba and the European Delegations Committee (virtually).

With help from the European Development Fund, the SISSTEM project received 13 million euros in financial support in total. The faculty of SISSTEM at the university consists of a Bachelor program in STEM (which started in 2019), a Master's program and a PHD research program that focuses on sustainable development in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Mr. Gerard Noto, Resident Representative of the UNDP for Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curacao and St. Maarten, indicated how this project correlates and supports the goals of the UNDP.

"SISSTEM is a strategic initiative, and a strong foundation for the development and implementation of



technological innovations, renewable resources and adaptation and mitigation of climate change," Noto remarked.

The faculty's goal is to educate a new generation of scientists and engineers who will support sustainability, diversify the local economy, reduce the dependency on fossil fuels and improve the capabilities of the SIDS to recover from disasters.

The faculty incorporates sustainability management on an academic level, while also strengthening the regional labor force with means necessary. There is hope that the faculty could be a center of excellence and renown in the SIDS region around the world.

The establishment of the

faculty is funded by the UN and implemented by UNDP, in coordination with the University of Aruba and Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium (KU Leuven).

In July 2019, the UN gave the UNDP the task to implement the renovation of the Maria Convent national monument. Additionally, the organization was also given the task of implementing the construction of laboratories for the faculty.

Offer planning for the renovation of this building started back in November 2020, and by February, 2021, the offer was still open. The first round of offers was not successful, because of the costs of material and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, this did not stop the process, and UNDP, along with

the university, arranged several meetings in October 2021 for the revision of the project.

The second round of offers was launched in February 2020, and even though it was a long process, they finally signed a contract with ALBO Aruba N.V. for the completion of the renovation.

Prime Minister Wever-Croes ratified the importance of a higher educational level in the formation and development of the community in order to create more opportunity for an economic development.

At the same time, she thanked the UN for their partnership, which made financing possible for the development of the programs' curricula in collaboration with KU Leuven, and

for the building to house the faculty.

Minister Geoffrey Wever expressed that as the Minister of Sustainable Development, he believes that it is essential to focus on sustainable development of this country, taking in account its people and the rest of the world: "That's why I'm very happy to hear that the university focuses on providing knowledge and creating capacity for the future doctors."

He explained that the expansion of more classrooms and offices for the university is an important part of the development of Aruba, and the cooperation with the UN showed that partnership is important for finding solutions for future challenges.

Minister Xiomara Maduro explained that the Maria Convent building was constructed in the year 1920 and the Dominican Sisters of Voorschoten moved from The Netherlands for the newly constructed building. In 1946, the first stone was placed for the chapel.

In the 50s, there were approximately 23 sisters living in the convent until its closure. The building was handed over to the government of Aruba, and underwent renovation in 1995. In 1996, the building was home to the Department of Culture of Aruba, the Department of Foreign Affairs and for a while, the Parliament of Aruba. □



Aqua Grill restaurant: The taste of New England with Caribbean flair



ORANJESTAD — One thing is for certain: Chef Scott Scheuerman and his team are famous for getting people hooked, just like the fish on your plate. You will get the taste of home fused with Caribbean while dining in elegance. Scheuerman will tell how Aqua Grill established its name since opening in 2002, and why it reaped accolades from such prestigious travel publications as Fodor's, who says, "This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers, who will find fresh fish galore..." Now is your chance to taste Aqua Grill's NEW seasonal menu and create a lifetime culinary memory.



'A Scheuer thing'

Secretly, we all know that the success of a restaurant begins in the kitchen. That is where the chef creates his magic and for Aqua Grill the culinary team has won an assortment of awards for their continuous delivery of 'haute-cuisine del mar.' Classic seafood is mingled with contemporary ideas resulting in surprising dishes that soon made the restaurant a must-dine, confirmed by established travel media specialists like Fodor's and Frommer's.

American-born Scheuerman, executive chef of Aqua Grill, is thrilled about 'his restaurant'. "We started out as a New England style seafood restaurant, patterned after Boston style. But we quickly blended into some Caribbean, local

flair... if you will. We do still offer the traditional New England dishes like whole Maine lobster, northern seafood plates like the salmon, tuna and swordfish. We buy also from the local fisherman to offer Caribbean dishes like snapper and grouper which are number one sellers in our restaurant being the most prevalent local fishes. Catches like wahoo, mahimahi and brasil are welcome too, anything that comes out of the water we embrace."

Fresh import from Boston

Aqua Grill flies in their own shipments on a weekly basis mostly from Boston because the price quality balance is the best, says the chef. "We are unique in this. Number one priority is buying fresh, we mean not frozen. Our original concept is New England seafood and we stick to that concept. They have a wonderful assortment of oysters and lobsters as well." Aqua Grill also offers international fusion type of menu items; actually all you wish for is there. A very balanced menu awaits you. "And we have options for meat lovers and vegetarians/vegans too. We, however, do not mix it up too much because we believe we do not want to lose our identity as



a seafood restaurant," Scheuerman adds.

Sublime menu

Now is the time to indulge in Aqua Grill's dinner experience. The established restaurant offers a sensational menu. We present to you a Raw Bar with among others fresh Oysters on the half Shell, Littleneck Clams, Peruvian Ceviche and Lobster Salad. Steamed Dumplings and Prawns or Steamed Mussels seduce you from the open view kitchen.

After that continue your gastronomic trip to heaven with the house specialties like Main Lobster, steamed or broiled or maybe you crave for the best Alaska King Crab Legs you have ever tasted?

You haven't reached your destination yet because there are more main course options to blow you away: Seared Chilean Sea Bass, Cioppino or Blackened Tuba are just some to mention.

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Another Treasure of Aruba's Beaches: Sea Glass!

NOORD - It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothened, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge" and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process. It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass. The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tum-

bles around in the water long enough is "Sea glass.

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handcrafts and jewelry!

Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges. Sometimes as the sea glass is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the

sea glass.

Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.

The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and the easiest to find are the brown (Amstel & Polar beer), green (Heineken & Balashi beer) and clear glass which are the soft much loved "soft drink" bottles.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day!

Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures!

Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation! ☐

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Article by Etnia Nativa

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Our gourd tree, the Calbas

EpisodeCXCII - 192

Destination values, native heritage, and cultural identity are what we advocate for in our own particular way of safeguarding all reasons to love Aruba. Etnia Nativa, through this cultural blog, "Island-Insight," shares native cultural awareness, educates, and safeguards native heritage. It is how we encourage you to experiment with an island-keeper state of mind during your stay.

In this episode, we introduce the Calbas (*Crescentia cujete*), an amazing tree that has been considered a sacred tree for many Amerindian cultural societies throughout the millennia. It blooms at night and is primarily pollinated by bats.

Its seeds have been dispersed all over the tropics by presumably hunter-gatherer nomads, and its proliferation continued during colonial times for its practicality, interesting shape, and reusable resistance. But this tree has also suffered discrimination lately by those who consider it something that belongs to the poor and the past, therefore cutting it down without any consideration.

The calbas fruit plays an important, if not central, role in the lives and mythology of Aruban and Mesoamerican histories and societies related to this part of the plant, attributed to its general durability and many practical applications, even medicinal ones. The "calbas" gourd is still used today in many kitchens, while others make beautiful handcrafted artifacts with it.

The gourd was used as a storage container; a gourd may hold harvested fruits, nuts, and crops or be used as a tool to serve and transport food or liquids. For thousands of years, the "calbas" has been extremely valuable as a practical, reusable bio-recipient as well as a musical instrument or in ceremonies. The pulp of the inner fruit is cooked into syrup to prevent the flu and upset stomachs. It is also said that this same white pulp full of flat black seeds is used against ticks and fleas by smearing the whole animal in it, letting it dry on its coat, letting it cure, and then rinsing it off with water.

Handcrafted maracas in the making: dried gourds with a stick inserted through them as a handle and filled with seeds as a shaker that is used to keep the rhythm during festivals and magical ceremonies. None compare with our Calbas; however, there are about 850 plant species that produce well-known natural



fruits, which later can be used as lovely biodegradable containers. Some offer a great variety of colors; others have flavor; and others come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from the spherical to the bottle-shaped; some are edible. Many originated in Mexico and Peru. In Europe, various species of gourds were highly valued and sought after for both practical and decorative purposes. The gourd, like many religious and metaphysical symbols, serves two functions: it represents the womb, which carries seeds of fertility, and it also represents a culturally symbolic musical instrument. When a gourd is used as a water container, it may also be considered a carrier of life. Without water, there is no life. Unlike a harvested crop, which must be uprooted from the earth and loses its life force, water is in a continuous state of life.

Long before the Europeans arrived, the Guarani drank mate, a South American beverage, in containers made of gourds, where they mixed medicinal and aromatic herbs. This is how different gourds and "calbas" play important roles in different cultures. In the Taino creation myth, it represents disbelief

and the loss of faith and was used in the divination rites of the Taínos. In this tribe, there is a story that tells that the Tainos, in their desire to "see" Yayael, murdered a warrior, who they were invoking in a ritual, believing that Yayael was physically inside the calbas. For this reason, happy in their eagerness to grab him, they spilled the "calbas' contents." When they realize that the contents of the gourd have turned into a fish, they give in to physical temptation and eat the fish. In this first myth, the pumpkins are represented as a tomb for dead beings and a womb for living beings.

Intrigued by Aruba's origins and its cultural heritage? Then we encourage you to do something outside of the tourist grid and become the exclusive visitors of Etnia Nativa, a private encounter set up where you will be able to touch and be touched by authentic Aruba heritage, a spectacle of native art, archaic as well as archaeological artifacts, lithic tools, colonial furniture, and other items of the island's bygone era. Get inside a recycled environment full of peace, relaxation, and knowledgeable Native stories.



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Linda Wolff, a trajectory dedicated to folkloric music



ORANJESTAD – Linda was born on the 9th of May 1955 in Aruba. At a very young age, she discovered her love and talent for singing. It didn't take long before she affiliated to the Santa Anna Choir and began dedicating to singing at the Santa Anna church in Noord.

IN 1979, Mr. Jossy Brokke Jr. organized a Mexican festival at the Club IOWUA, and here Linda participated singing the song 'Los Laureles' and was among the 10 finalists. She went on to represent Aruba in the grand Mexican Festival of the Antilles, which took place at the Holiday Inn hotel in Curaçao. Linda gave a beautiful performance that night. Back then, Linda was part of the Mariachi Montañeros of Noord.

Since that time, Linda continued dedicating to singing and continued demonstrating her talent and gaining experience as a singer of Ranchera music.

Linda Wolff was the main singer of Mariachi Guadarricana for a long time, where Linda would sing at family parties, birthdays, weddings and other special activities. She continued participating in most Mexican festivals, showcasing her love for this music genre, with her sensual voice and an attractive and charismatic personality which proved popular among those loving the mariachi music.

In a past interview, Linda said that back when she and her cousins were

young teenagers, they started their own home 'aguinaldo' – traditional Christmas music – and together at the yearend they would sing all the Venezuelan carols: tucusito, o luna, fuego al canon etc. showing the joy and union that they had to enjoy and sing as a family.

Linda did not stop at mariachi music, but also dedicated herself to music and singing participating in different festivals, including Gospel, Dande, Tumba and a festival dedicated to our Flag and Anthem, 18th of March and folkloric mu-

sic.

In many occasions, Linda was a finalist in these festivals by showing her beautiful voice in each song.

In 1994 she participated in the grand Festival Tipico y Dande and she was the first finalist in the female category.

In 2010, Linda participated in the Gospel Festival – Soldiers of Christ and finished in 5th place. The following year in the same festival she won second place.

In 2018, Linda received a well-deserved award at the Cas di Cultura, awarded by Fundacion Artistar during a Mexican music festival for children and youth. Linda took guitar lessons and she was accompanying herself for her favorite songs.

After a while, Linda integrated into the group Lirios del Campo by invitation and was directed by Mr. Vicente Tromp, with Linda as singer and guitarist.

Linda also sang in the popular group The New Dimension, before she went on to join the popular group Placentero Ritmo y Cuerde.



Linda was part of Placentero Ritmo y Cuerde for many years.

Back in 1993, when Seaport Market Place would organize weekly activities including a Tropical Night, Placentero would animate this night with rhythm and flavor for tourists and locals to enjoy, and Linda was already part of the group singing and moving to the rhythm to the songs of their own production.

During her trajectory with this group, Linda sang many times at family parties and

any celebration throughout the year. She participated in different festivals and had the opportunity of recording different songs for the yearend, many of them composed by Mr. Robert Maduro.

Linda Wolff was a great person and singer with an unmatched charisma, humble and charming character, always cheerful. On 18th of January our people said our final good-byes to Linda in sadness but consoled by her beautiful and unforgettable memories. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Like the
1 Gum Capitol
masses 40 Therefore
5 Reduced 41 Hardly
amount heroine

9 Homer classic
11 Pasta topping
12 Black-board material

13 Inert gas
14 Sewing aid
15 Car parts
17 Stamp users

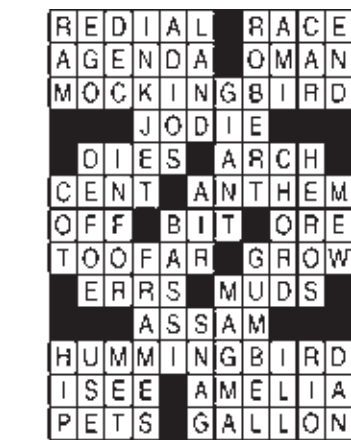
19 Maiden name label
20 Low card
21 Sleep spot

22 Country division
24 Dietary concern
26 Coped
29 Attach a patch

30 Sprees
32 Some fast-food chicken
34 Guy's friend
35 Mexican farewell

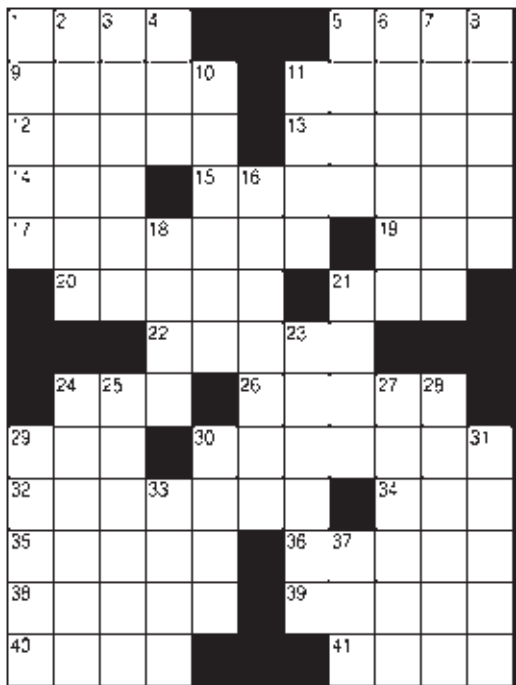
36 Steer clear of
38 Gives for a time

DOWN
1 Bits of smoke
2 In cahoots
3 Wiest of films
4 Was inactive
5 Cooking fat
6 Oregon city
7 Got a touch-down
8 Good judgment



Yesterday's answer

10 Flaw 27 Pea
11 Lacking or
16 Device peanut
28 Barbers
29 Hack-neyed
30 Porgy's love
31 Winter gliders
33 Ninny
37 Auction unit
21 Abacus piece
23 Showed fear
24 Tributary
25 Storefront sight



2-8

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-8

CRYPTOQUOTE

BUSA TUADX'R EZNA RPA
QUOBT JU 'OUCXT. BUSA HC
QPZR EZNAD RPA OHTA
QUORPQHBA. — WOZXNBHX G.
IUXAD

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IF YOU LIVE TO BE A HUNDRED, I WANT TO LIVE TO BE A HUNDRED MINUS ONE DAY SO I NEVER HAVE TO LIVE WITHOUT YOU A A MINE

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216163



Liz Weston: 'Bridge' your way to Social Security

By **LIZ WESTON**
of NerdWallet

Delaying the start of Social Security benefits is a powerful way for retirees to cope with inflation, survive bad investment markets and reduce the risk they'll run short of money. The advantages of waiting are so great that financial planners often recommend their clients tap other savings, such as retirement funds, to help them delay claiming.

Employers could increase their workers' financial security by offering a similar "bridge" strategy as part of 401(k)s and other workplace retirement plans, according to a study by the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. The bridge strategy would tap a worker's retirement account to pay amounts roughly equal to the foregone Social Security checks. People can create such bridges on their own, of course. If Social Security projects your benefit at age 62 will be \$1,500 a month, for example, you could set up automatic monthly withdrawals of that amount from your 401(k) at retirement. But having an employer offer the option could make the process easier and encourage more people to delay, says Gal Wettstein, the center's senior research economist



This undated file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com.

Associated Press

THE BENEFITS OF WAITING ARE HUGE

Social Security benefits are incredibly valuable to retirees. Benefits are adjusted annually for inflation and, unlike retirement savings, can't be depleted by bad markets, bad investing decisions or bad luck.

People can claim Social Security retirement benefits at any time from ages 62 to 70. Starting before your

full retirement age, which is currently between 66 and 67, typically means settling for a permanently reduced benefit. Delaying beyond full retirement age, by contrast, increases retirement benefits by 8% each year until your benefit maxes out at age 70.

Waiting until age 70 can increase your Social Security checks by at least 76% compared to starting at 62, Wettstein says.

"The higher monthly benefit means you have more guaranteed income, which will last you for the rest of your life," Wettstein says.

(By the way: Your Social Security benefits begin earning inflation adjustments starting at age 62, whether you've started receiving them or not, according to the Social Security Administration.

So next year's 8.7% cost of living increase is no reason to speed up your application if you're able to hold off.)

MOST PEOPLE ARE STILL CLAIMING TOO EARLY

Copious research has shown that most people are better off waiting to claim Social Security. It's particularly important for the higher earner in a married couple to delay, since that benefit determines what the survivor gets after the first spouse dies.

A study by economists from the Federal Reserve and Boston University found that "virtually all" U.S. workers ages 45 to 62 should wait beyond age 65 to claim, and 90% should wait until age 70, although only about 10% currently do. Claiming too early will cost the typical worker over \$182,000 in lifetime discretionary spending, the economists found.

The average claiming age

inched up between 2008 and 2018, from 63.6 to 64.7 for men and from 63.6 to 64.6 for women, according to the Social Security Administration. Most people still claim their benefits before reaching their full retirement age, which means their benefits are permanently reduced.

FEW RETIREMENT PLANS HELP WITH PAYOUT STRATEGIES

Many employers provide matches to encourage people to accumulate money for retirement, but few help with payout strategies when it's time to retire, Wettstein notes. A few offer the option to annuitize, which means turning some or all of the account balance over to an insurance company in exchange for a guaranteed stream of payments.

Most people don't much like the idea of giving up big chunks of their savings, Wettstein notes. His study presented an alternative the employer-provided bridge to a nationally representative sample of 1,349 people ages 50 to 65 who had not retired and who had at least \$25,000 in their 401(k).

The strategy would allow participants to use up to half of their retirement account balances to replace Social Security checks while they delayed claiming. □

AMC to charge more for good seats in movie theaters



People walk by the AMC 34th Street theater on March 5, 2021, in New York.

Associated Press

By **JAKE COYLE** AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Middle seats at many U.S. movie theaters just got more expensive. AMC Theaters, the nation's largest movie theater chain, on Monday unveiled a new pricing scheme in which seat location determines how much your movie ticket costs. Seats in the middle of the auditorium will cost a dollar or two more, while seats in the front row will be slightly cheaper.

AMC said the pricing plan, dubbed "Sightline," has already been rolled out in some locations and, by the

end of the year, will be in place at all domestic AMC theaters during showings after 4 p.m. Seats classified as "standard sightline" will be at the regular price. If you want to pay less for the "value sightline" seats, you have to be a member of the chain's subscription service, AMC Stubs.

As movie theaters have attempted to recover from the pandemic, exhibitors have increasingly looked at more variable pricing methods. That's included charging more for sought-after movies like "The Batman" in their first week of release.

Last weekend, Paramount Pictures partnered with theater chains to offer slightly reduced ticket prices for the comedy "80 for Brady." And last year, during a dry spell in theaters, tickets at most movie theaters were \$3 for "National Cinema Day."

But in most circumstances, movie tickets are getting more expensive, especially when factoring in large-format screens and 3D showings. The average 3D premium format ticket for the biggest box-office hit in recent years, "Avatar: The Way of Water," was about \$16.50. □

Nets' Irving drama makes other East contenders look stable

By NOAH TRISTER
AP Sports Writer

Blake Griffin is no stranger to trade drama. He was dealt from the Clippers to the Pistons in 2018, and last season he was playing for the Brooklyn Nets when they sent James Harden to Philadelphia in a February blockbuster.

These days, Griffin is with the Boston Celtics, who seem awfully stable when compared with those Nets. "It's a tough time of year, but as far as this team goes, we're in a pretty good spot," Griffin said after Boston's win at Detroit on Monday night. "This team is very focused."

In the aftermath of another Brooklyn bombshell the Nets broke up their remaining All-Star duo of Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving by trading Irving to Dallas the other top teams in the Eastern Conference can feel pretty content with their situations. Boston has the best record in the NBA and a team that reached the Finals a season ago. Milwaukee has the league's longest current winning streak at eight games.

Even the 76ers, who haven't always been a picture of tranquility in recent years, have won nine of 11 and are third in the conference, just three games behind the Celtics.

The Nets had a stretch of 16 wins in 17 games from



Referee Ashley Moyer-Gleich signals a three-point basket by Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (0) during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Detroit Pistons, Monday, Feb. 6, 2023, in Detroit.

late November to early January, but Irving's recent trade request and the fulfillment of it now leave Brooklyn a very uncertain threat in the East. Cleveland jumped ahead of the Nets on Monday night and into fourth place in the conference.

"I don't think (the trade) affects Boston, Milwaukee they're still at the top," Detroit coach Dwane Casey said before facing the Celtics. "It could affect Brooklyn. ... It's interesting for the league and it just lets you know that anything can happen." Griffin said he was

a little surprised the deal came together so quickly. "I think Dallas has been wanting to get him for a little bit. Now probably feel like the West is kind of open right now and (the Mavericks are) trying to go for it," he said. "It's good for both sides. Kyrie wanted out and didn't want to be there and you know, hopefully both sides are happy."

As for why Brooklyn's star-studded team which at one point included Durant, Irving and Harden didn't reach its potential, there are a number of explanations.

"Health is one of them," Griffin said. "Those guys played like 16 games together or something. And, don't think the pieces were utilized the right way."

The Celtics recovered from a recent three-game losing streak and have won three of four. They're trying to hold off Milwaukee atop the East. The Bucks are a game back.

"We're very confident," Milwaukee big man Brook Lopez said. "We're just trying to play together and keep getting better."

The Bucks and Celtics have made deep runs into the

postseason the past two years. Philadelphia hasn't reached the Finals since 2001.

The 76ers showed they might have that potential this season when Joel Embiid scored 47 points in a win over Denver late last month. Coach Doc Rivers understands it's important to go into the postseason rested and ready.

"The March schedule is tough, more because of the travel and the back-to-backs than the opponent," he said. "The opponents are all tough, we don't care about that. That's going to be an interesting month for us on what we're going to do as far as playing guys, resting guys."

The Celtics, Bucks and 76ers might make some moves of their own before Thursday's trade deadline, but they're unlikely to shake up their rosters the way Brooklyn did. The Nets had a dissatisfied star and decided to part with him. Boston, Milwaukee and Philadelphia, on the other hand, can deal from positions of strength.

"You know there's a lot going on in the NBA. It's exciting, fun for everyone to watch and listen and all that stuff," Lopez said. "But obviously we're really good at just staying focused, keeping our head grounded and focusing on what's next." □

Associated Press

Diana Taurasi has sights set on playing at Paris Olympics

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer

Diana Taurasi said immediately after winning her fifth Olympic gold medal in Tokyo that she might try for a record sixth in Paris. It's still on her mind 17 months out of the 2024 Paris Olympics. "It's something that it's on my radar," Taurasi told The Associated Press in a phone interview Tuesday after the first day of a USA Basketball training camp in Minnesota. "I'm still competitive, still driven, still want to play, I still love being a part of USA Basketball."

Taurasi will be 42 at the time

of the Paris Games, but said if she's healthy enough she'd like to give it a go.

"If the opportunity comes to play and be a part of it, it's something I've always taken a lot of pride in," said Taurasi, who shares the record of five gold medals with Sue Bird. "When you get to my age at this point in my career, you just try to win every day. Right now this is a good opportunity to be part of this team moving forward we'll see what happens."

She said she would have played at the World Cup last year in Australia, but

had a quad strain that kept her out of the end of the WNBA season.

"I got hurt a little bit before. I had a good conversation with Coach (Cheryl) Reeve and (Jim) Tooley. I felt like I hadn't played enough basketball to be out there and help," Taurasi said. "That's the biggest thing with USA Basketball is being able to help the team win." Taurasi is an unrestricted free agent although she is expected to return back to Phoenix where she's spent her entire career since getting drafted No. 1 overall in 2003. □



Diana Taurasi takes part in drills during a minicamp for the U.S. women's national basketball team, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

Super Bowl backup QBs have shined from Hostetler to Foles



Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Nick Foles throws during the first half of the NFL Super Bowl 52 football game against the New England Patriots Sunday, Feb. 4, 2018, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

By JOSH DUBOW

AP Pro Football Writer

Brock Purdy's bid to join the select group of quarterbacks to go from a backup for most of the season to a Super Bowl starter got derailed when he suffered his own injury in the NFC championship game.

Purdy's elbow injury helped contribute to San Francisco's 31-7 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles that set the stage for a Super Bowl matchup of first and second team All-Pro quarterbacks Patrick Mahomes and Jalen Hurts instead of another improbable story.

There have been several examples of backups leading a team to the big game with the most recent coming in the 2017 season when Nick Foles took over in Philadelphia for the final three games of the regular season after Carson Wentz got hurt.

Foles struggled at first before a storybook finish, becoming the only QB ever to throw for at least 350 yards and three TDs in the conference title game and Super Bowl in the same season to outduel Tom Brady for the championship with a 41-33 win.

"I wasn't worrying about the scoreboard, I wasn't worrying about the time, I was just playing ball," Foles said after that game. "I think sometimes you start worrying about that too much, it starts creeping in your brain. I was just playing." Foles was the 14th quarterback to start the Super Bowl after not holding that role for the season opener, including Brady (2016) and Ben Roethlisberger (2010), who were suspended to start those seasons. The others fall into a few categories. There were those who seized the job early in the season such as Jake Delhomme did for Carolina when he replaced Rodney Peete at halftime of the 2003 season opener; Brady when he stepped in for an injured Drew Bledsoe in Week 3 in 2001; and Joe Kapp, who replaced Gary Cuozzo for Minnesota in the second game in 1969. Then there were teams looking for a midseason jolt that turned into Super Bowl wins. Roger Staubach shared time with Craig Morton in 1971 before taking over for good midway through the year to launch a Hall of Fame career with his first Super Bowl win.

Three years later, Terry Bradshaw began the season on the bench behind Joe Gilliam before taking over as starter in Week 7, then winning the first of four Super Bowl titles. Trent Dilfer then stepped in for Tony Banks midway through the 2000 season for Baltimore, lost his first start and then won 11 in a row behind a dominant defense.

There were two other cases of injuries leading to changes before the stretch run, with Jim Plunkett stepping in for Dan Pastorini in 1980 in Oakland; and Colin Kaepernick doing the same in San Francisco after Alex Smith had a concussion in 2012. Purdy was trying to join the group to make the Super Bowl after starting five or fewer games in the regular season alongside the Rams' Vince Ferragamo (1979), Washington's Doug Williams (1987), the Giants' Jeff Hostetler (1990) and Foles (2017). Hostetler had started just two games in almost seven full seasons for the Giants when Phil Simms injured his foot in Week 14. After starting that season with 10 straight wins, the Giants lost three out of four and were mostly written off as a contender when Simms got hurt.

"Everyone had jumped off the bandwagon," Hostetler recalled in 2018. "We were completely shot as a team. That was the outside looking in. Inside where we were at, we just rallied the wagons. It was us versus the world. We just rallied around each other and it showed."

When he stepped in for Simms in December, Hostetler had thrown 93 passes since entering the NFL in 1984. Hostetler managed to lead the Giants to two wins to end the regular season, a lopsided playoff opener over Chicago, then upsets over two-time defending champion San Francisco in the NFC title game (15-13 on five field goals) and Buffalo (20-19) in the Super Bowl. □

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